

August 7, 1956

Dear Bill:

Your letter of July 22 was waiting for my return from a trip to Woods Hole. I very much appreciate your good offices in connection with the Ciba Symposium; Pontecorvo was in Ann Arbor, where we discussed the matter too. Naturally, I will do whatever I can to accept this cordial invitation; I am glad to note that "drug resistance" need not be taken seriously: what more is there to say about that (as a genetic problem)? The schools are pretty firmly fixed now and without some new kinds of experiments, who's going to change his mind.

Unfortunately, the symposium does not fit in well with our Australian plans, as we expect to reach Melbourne early June; in fact it may be a problem to find time for the Ciba trip, but I hope it can be managed. Pontecorvo has set some wheels in motion to see if enough funds can be raised so that Esther can accompany me; whether I'd make the trip alone is undecided.

I'm surprised you were concerned about reprints-- did you suppose I would neglect to send them to you? -- but it's my own fault for being so tardy about shipping them out. Our secretarial help is scanty, and the distribution of 500 or more units is almost too formidable a job, and I haven't done it too well.

I didn't understand your "F- which is genetically Hfr". How does it differ from other F- types; I thought we both agreed that F- was defined by the compatibility test. I do agree that the terminology is confusing now, and the compatibility state may have to be expressed independently of the presence of an "Hfr gene" or an "F agent", and perhaps you have something along this line in mind. After motility selection, we have isolated a number of what we call "refractory F-" types from Hfr stocks; Alan Richter here has been studying them.

Haldane, Penrose & Co. ought to see your remark "since this is a medical school we regrettably do not have either Genetics..."; I had thought the English were leaders in medical genetics-- though some to think of it the people I have in mind are no more generally associated with medical schools than they are over here. We've been rather remiss about this at Wisconsin too, but since the installation of a new medical dean (J.Z. Bowers) a program in medical genetics has gotten under way, with a young fellow Newton Morton. You may hear more of him; i.e., he's spending the year in this lab to build up a background in non-statistical genetics,

Sincerely,

  
Joshua Lederberg